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S E R M O N

Preach'd at the last

Episcopal Visitation

F O R

CONFIRMATION,

I N T H E

DIOCESE of LINCOLN.

WITH A

PREFACE shewing the Reasons of its Publication.

And a POSTSCRIPT occasioned by some *Letters* lately published in the *Weekly Miscellany*.

By WILLIAM WARBURTON, *A. M.*
Author of *the Divine Legation of Moses demonstrated, &c.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for FLETCHER GYLES, against *Grays-Inn*, in *Holborn*.
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P R E F A C E.

THE second Epistle of St. Peter, from which I have taken my Text, had been long suspected, by Ancients as well as Moderns of great Note, not to belong to the Author, whose Name it bears; when an illustrious Writer †, by a happy Discovery of the Causes of that Diversity of Style, on which the Suspicion was founded, fully vindicated it to our Apostle.

I. We may now safely urge it as the genuine Work of St. Peter. And, allowing the Fact, I dare offer the following Discourse to our Free-thinkers, for an INTERNAL PROOF of the Divine Inspiration of that Apostle: as shewing the Precepts delivered in my Text to contain a Knowledge of human Nature amazingly clear, profound, and com-

† Author of the Dissertation on the Authority of the second Epistle to St. Peter.

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prehensive: A Knowledge that, proceeding from the Simplicity of an illiterate unstudied Fisherman, disgraces the Wisdom of Greece and Rome. I dare challenge our Adversaries to produce, out of the whole Treasury of ancient Learning and Philosophy, any thing approaching to the Excellence and Perfection of this short Summary of human Conduct: And yet it is well known, that the ancient Sages most excelled in this way of Writing; for they delighted to reduce their long Studies, and laborious Searches after Happiness, into short and compendious Aphorisms. If therefore they fail here, what shall hinder us from regarding this Passage, (of which my whole Discourse is only a plain and simple Explanation) as a strong Evidence of the real Accomplishment of our Saviour's Promise to his Disciples, of sending the Holy Spirit to lead them into all Truth?

II. *In the Course of my Explanation I was invited to illustrate the Importance of the Apostolic Precepts by a Description of those Popish Corruptions, which*
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a Neglect of these Precepts had introduced into the World. This afforded me an Opportunity of giving a general and entire View of the Roman-Catholick Church, in the Virtue of their Saints, the Science of their Doctors, and the Discipline of their Priests. In which, tho' I have express'd myself with the free Resentment of a Man, who regards Popery as, not only the Corruption of the true Religion, but an Insult on the Sense, and an Invasion of the Liberties of Mankind; yet have I carefully endeavoured to keep within the Bounds of that Truth and Charity, which constitute the Character of a Minister of the Gospel.

How expedient a true Picture of Popery is at this Time, I leave to the Consideration of those, who have observed the late uncommon Industry and Successes of the Emissaries of the Church of Rome. These Men, who compass Sea and Land to gain one Profelyte, have been always watchful to take Advantage of our Follies. In the Time of our Fathers, which was the Age of Secretaries,

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taries, they struck in, we are told, to increase the Confusion amongst them; as hoping those numerous Divisions would at length carry us back to their Uniformity. And in this Age of Infidelity they have assumed, as is well known, the Personages of Scepticks and Hobbists; as hoping, that believing nothing will at last terminate in believing all things. Nor do these seem to be extravagant Expectations, if we judge either from Experience, or the Nature of Things. Our Infidels have thought themselves extreamly acute in comparing the human Mind to a Ballance; in which Motives, forsooth, are the Weights: But, if its Operations must needs be mechanical, I should think it might be better explained by a Pendulum; which, when well leaded, is incessantly swinging from one Extream to the other. This is certain, the Absurdities of Popery have made many Free-thinkers abroad: And why the Absurdities of Free-thinking may not as well make Papists at home, I leave to be considered.

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I cannot end this Head without recommending what has been said above to the serious Reflection of my Reverend Brethren. It is not to call upon them to a watchful Attendance on the Motions of these their subtil Enemies. 'Tis their commendable Vigilance and Vigour that perhaps occasion that Indiscretion in some few of them, which I would endeavour to remove; namely, the unreasonable Suspicions they are apt to entertain of one another; whilst they are all labouring in their several Ways, to oppose the present over-bearing Torrent of Infidelity. Our Adversaries, as I have said, are able ones: and it would be strange, if such had nothing in their Conduct worthy the Imitation of Men engaged in a better Cause. And we know it is no less honourable than politick to learn of an Enemy. Now when was it ever seen, that either Free-thinker or Papist suspected their professed Writers of having too much, or too little Faith? or ever gave any foolish Intimation, that they were in secret Understanding with their Adversaries? They have always been

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*too wise to weaken their own Hands;
and a thorough Confidence and Peace
have reigned amongst them,*

—— Tigris agit rabidâ cum Tigride pacem
Perpetuam: sævis inter se convenit Urfis.

*What then common Discretion hath
taught these Men to do for the Support
of the worst Causes, surely Truth and
Charity, joined to Discretion, should in-
cline us to for the Support of the very
best.*

2 PETER, Chap. i.

5. *Giving all Diligence, add to your FAITH; Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge;*
6. *And to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness;*
7. *And to Godliness, Brotherly-kindness; and to Brotherly-kindness, CHARITY.*

THE Holy Apostle, beginning his farewell Epistle to the Churches with a Commendation of their *Faith*, takes, from thence, Occasion of instructing them in the Nature of that *Christian Building* which they are to erect upon it; and, as his last *Labour of Love* brings together, and lays in, all the various *Materials* necessary for so great a Work.

But we shall have a very wrong, and much too low, Conception of our Apostle's Skill, if we consider these but as Materials rudely thrown together without Art or Choice; and standing in need of other Hands to range them in that Architectonic Order wherein they are to be employed. For on a careful Survey it will be found, that no other than that Spirit which directed the Workmen of the Old *Tabernacle* could give so artful a Disposition to the

Materials of this new *Building not made with Hands, whose Maker and Builder is God.*

He hath marked out the Foundation, strengthened the Basis, proportioned the Members, adorned the Superstructure, and crowned the Whole with the richest of Materials; and all this with such Justice of Science, Sublimity of Thought, and Force of Genius, that every foregoing Virtue gives Stability to the following; and every following imparts Perfection to that which went before: Where the three *Orders* of this heavenly Architecture, the *Human*, the *Divine*, and *Social* Virtues, are so exquisitely disposed, that the *Human* and *Social* have their proper Strengths and Graces heightened and supported by the common Connexion of the *Divine*: Where every thing, in short, concurs, in its *proper* Station, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*

In Conformity to the Practice of human Instructors, who deliver it as a Principle to their Disciples, that no considerable Advance is to be made in Science without much Labour, our Holy Artist introduces his Precepts with this Preliminary—GIVING ALL DILIGENCE. And if this be necessary in civil Matters, where nothing opposes the Progress towards Perfection but *the Length of Art and the Shortness of Life*; with how great Reason are we *here* enjoined *Diligence*, where, besides those Discouragements, we have numerous Enemies *within* us under the Disguise of Friends, the confederated Passions, to retard our Progress, and Devils, and evil Men *without*, to stop us as we press forward in the Career of Virtue?

But the Necessity of this *Diligence* will be better seen in the Sequel of this Discourse, where we shew the Care and Circumspection required in the Cultivation of every Christian Virtue, here recommended,

ed, to prevent its languishing by Defect, or luxuriating by Excess.

Our Apostle, *as a wise Master-Builder*, chuses for his Foundation that *Rock* on which his Lord had promised him to *build his Church*;

Add to your FAITH—

as directed by the same Divine Spirit with his Fellow-Labourer *St. Paul*, who bids every *Man take heed how he buildeth*; for other Foundation can no *Man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ*.

But the Simplicity and Clearness of the *Doctrine of Faith* could not secure it, even in the apostolic Times, from being perverted to countenance the most fatal Error concerning its Nature and Efficacy; while it was mistaken to be *alone* sufficient to make *Man* acceptable to his Maker, and *without good Works*, to intitle him to the Rewards of the Gospel-Covenant. To explain the original and fundamental Causes of this Error, and to shew how the *perfect Novelty of the Doctrine of Faith*—the *Method the Holy Spirit directed the Apostles to use in the Propagation of the Gospel*—and the *illustrious Marks of that Spirit, which then accompanied the Profession of the Faith*,—to shew, I say, how all these *accidentally* contributed to support this Error, is beside the Bounds and Purpose of the present Discourse.

It shall suffice to observe, that this dangerous Extravagance, which hath continued more or less, to infect every Age of the Church, spread immediately so swift and wide, under Cover of that Divine Truth, that a *Man is justified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law* a (Truth of the very Essence of Christianity) that the Apostolic Writers found it necessary frequently and formally to oppose and confute it. And on this Account I suppose it was that *St. Peter's* first Precept enjoins our adding or building Virtue upon Faith.

Add to your Faith VIRTUE.

From henceforth *Faith*, which, while it was single and solitary, remained *dead*, as the sacred Writers express it, being thus *cloathed upon* by *Virtue*, becomes reanimated, and that *lively Faith* bringing forth the Fruits of Immortality.

A reciprocal Advantage *Virtue* receives from *Faith*, on which it is thus built: For we shall find these Advantages to be all the way reciprocal. The Weakness of unguided Reason, and the Violence of ill-balanced Passions, had reduced moral *Virtue*, in the Pagan World, to so shadowy and precarious an Existence, that the wisest Teachers of it openly lamented its helpless Condition, and owned that nothing but a Revelation from Heaven could realize and support it.

They mistook the true Foundation of Morality, some placing it in the native Excellence of *Virtue*, others in the outward and public Benefits, of which it is productive. They were left destitute, and exposed to the free Rage of inordinate Passions, without Aid, and with uncertain Prospect of Reward.

But it was the Dispensation of *Faith* only, that discovered the true Foundation of Morality to be, Conformity to the Will and Command of our Creator and Sovereign Lord. It was *Faith* only, that enabled us to surmount all the Opposition of the Appetites, by shewing us the infinite Rewards that are held out to the good Christian, and placed within his Reach, by the Assistance of the Holy Spirit. Thus, to use the Words of the Apostle *Jude*, *Ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy Faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keeping yourselves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal Life.*

But tho' *Virtue* is here enjoined, and in all the Preachings of our blessed Saviour, and in all the Writings of his Apostles, incessantly repeated and
inforced

inforced, yet, if we expect to find in them any regular or methodick Body of Morality, we shall be greatly deceived. For this, the *New Testament*, all along, refers us to another Guide. For God having before revealed the whole Doctrine of Morality by the Religion of Nature, and none of God's Revelations contradicting another, it was enough for the first Teachers of Christianity, when they preached up Virtue, to refer their Followers for Particulars, to what natural Religion taught concerning it.

This being so, and that the great Pandect of the Law of Nature is to be searched and studied, in order to attain a perfect Knowledge of moral Duty, there is need of much Pains and Exercise of Mind to learn that Virtue, we are here enjoined to build upon Faith. For tho' Nature hath stamp'd so strongly the first Principles of moral Duty in the Breasts of all Men, that even a kind of friendly Instinct will not suffer us to be quite ignorant of them; yet the numerous Deductions, from those first Principles, of what is fit and right, in every Circumstance of Life, being to be collected by the setting together, comparing, and sorting our Ideas, through all the various Combinations of moral Complexities, it requires, even with the divine Assistance of Holy Writ, much Reflexion and Habit; and without that Assistance, as the Experience of all Ages hath shewn, is a Task utterly unassurmountable.

Scripture then constantly referring to the Law of Nature, to one much a Stranger to that Law, what can be the Result of his Study of the Scriptures, if modest, but Doubt and Uncertainty; if vain and presuming, and if, at the same time, (which has too often happened) by Profession a Teacher of others, but Mistakes and Errors, the fatal Errors of Superstition and Fanaticism? For
doubt-

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doubtless to the Ignorance of natural Religion must be attributed the Extravagancies to which so many Sects and Parties have, in their several Turns, been obnoxious.

But much of these Mischiefs had been avoided, had Men duly attended to the Words of our Apostle: For to prevent them was the Design of the next Precept of my Text. *Add*, says he,

to Virtue KNOWLEDGE ;

or that Wisdom, which is the Result of the Study of Nature in the Pursuit of Truth.

And that you may see with how *prophetic*, as well as *just*, a Spirit St. *Peter* was here directed, I shall stop a Moment to hold you out a Picture of *Virtue* unattended with that *Knowledge*, copied from no obscure or discredited Originals; but from such whose Lives are preached up for Examples, and whose Deaths are commemorated with divine Honours; from such as have Shrines and Altars dedicated to their Worship; and Vows and Petitions offered up to their Divinity; in one Word, *Papish Saints*.

To understand this Matter aright, we must consider, that *Virtue* consists in acting agreeably to those Relations, in which we stand to our common Humanity, our Fellow-Creatures, and our Creator. For as *Religion*, in the larger Sense of the Word, includes the Duty we owe ourself and Neighbour, so *Morality*, in its larger Sense, includes the Observance of the Relation we stand in towards God. And when the Practice respects Man it is called *Virtue*; when it respects God, *Piety*.

These Relations are commonly distinguished into the *human*, the *social*, and the *divine* Virtues: The End and Design of all which is to perfect Man's Nature,

1. By restraining, regulating, and directing the private

private and selfish Appetites, *according to the Dictates of Reason.*

2. By cultivating, improving, and enlarging the social Passions and Affections, and employing them in the Service of our Species, *according to the Dictates of Charity.*

3. By exercising our Understandings in the Contemplation of the first Cause, and by owning our Relation to him in suitable Acts of rational Worship, in order to unite us to our supreme Good, *according to the Dictates of Grace.*

Now when, in the Church of *Rome*, Knowledge came to be esteemed of no Use to improve or direct *Virtue*; but that *Ignorance* was thought as well the Mother of all other Virtues, as of *Devotion*: When the *Law of Nature* came to be shunned as a dangerous and fallacious Guide; and *Faith*, traditional, not scriptural, had usurped its Province of interpreting *Gospel-righteousness*; then it was, that these illustrious Examples of a new kind of Virtue appeared amongst them, in a barbarous Rabble of Saints; who, under the common Name of *Religious*, and on Pretence of a more sublime and elevated Virtue, than Natural Religion taught, ran into the most horrid Excesses of Fanaticism and Superstition. For

1. Instead of *regulating* the selfish Appetites, they laboured all they could to *eradicate* and *destroy* them, as Things, even in their Nature, vicious; as the graceless Furniture of *the old Man with his Affections and Lusts*. All was dismal and dark about them: Inordinate Watchings, excruciating Disciplines, attenuating Labours. These, aggravated by Hunger, Thirst, and Nakedness, were the best Means these poor mistaken Followers of him, who said *his Yoke was easy and his Burthen light*, could think of to regulate the selfish Passions. Till the Body, deprived of every kind of Good,
which

which the gracious Hand of Providence hath so largely poured out for the Solace of its Creatures, gave way and yielded to the Fury of this fanatic Penitence ; while *he* was esteemed the greatest *Saint* who was the most expeditious *Suicide*.

2. Instead of *improving* and *enlarging* the social Affections, these Saints fled into Caves and Desarts, or shut themselves up for Life in the Dust and Silence of a Cloister. Where, to unfit themselves for serving their Friends and Families, they divested themselves of their Possessions, to give to *pious Uses* ; that is, to support the Sloth of lazy Mendicants, or the Luxury of debauched Churchmen : To unfit themselves for Submission to the Civil Magistrate, they entered into treasonable Engagements of unlimited Obedience to their spiritual Superiors : To unfit themselves for serving their Country or Mankind, they took Vows of voluntary Poverty, and renounced all secular Employments : And lastly, as much as in them lay, to make War against the very Being of their Species, they unnaturally devoted themselves to a single Life, in blasphemous Opposition to that first great Command and Blessing, *increase and multiply*.

3. Lastly, instead of using their *Reason* in the Offices of Devotion, to attain the supreme Good, an Union with the Deity ; by crediting their *Imagination*, they have often thrown themselves, with extatic Transports, into the Arms of the Demon. While, in the Place of internal Acts of sober Meditation, nothing was seen but Trances, Raptures and Visions ; nothing heard but Predictions, Prophecies and Revelations : In the Place of external Acts of rational Worship, they celebrated the Holy Offices with gay and childish Ornaments, with barbarous and superstitious Rites, and with base and servile Prostrations. And the *favourite Objects* of their Worship were in all respects agreeable to
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the *Form*, either the idolatrous Adoration of a consecrated *Wafer*, or of those yet *less substantial* Divinities, which have their Existence only in a lying Legend.

You have here a faithful Picture of Popish *Virtue* stript of *Knowledge*. From whence you may collect how miserable a Creature Man grows, when he throws aside his *Reason*, the first great Gift of Heaven, in order to follow the false Lights, that Custom, Fancy, or the Passions set up in his Breast; and how equally miserable that State must be, which supports a Religion, where *Ignorance* has divested *Virtue* of all its Charms, poisoned all its Health, and made it as destructive to Society, as barefaced open *Vice*.

Thus have we seen, by a terrible Example, the Mischiefs done by *Ignorance* to *Virtue*; from whence we may collect of how much Service *Knowledge* is to it.

We now proceed to shew the reciprocal Service *Virtue* does to *Knowledge*. *Knowledge* is the Attainment and Perception of Truth; and *useful Knowledge* the Attainment and Perception of those Truths, that tend to the perfecting our Nature. But the inordinate Passions, operating averfely to such Truths, cloud and darken the Understanding, so as to mislead us even from those of the most easy Discovery, and of the highest Importance to be known. Again, to acquire a competent Share of *Knowledge* we must, as I have said, labour hard in following Truth thro' all her Recesses: But it is only the Pleasure of the Purchase, which can engage us heartily in the Pursuit: And *that* can arise from nothing but the Amiability of the Object. Now while *Vice* usurps the Heart, *Truth*, her moral Enemy, will be but a neglected Guest. But when *Virtue* has reassumed her Seat, the Clouds of Error disperse, and a Passion for Truth bright-

ens and inflames the Understanding. For *Truth* and *Virtue* are twin-born Sisters; and, with only a Name of Distinction, participate of one common Nature, *Truth* being speculative *Virtue*, and *Virtue* only practical *Truth*. And now the Understanding makes the most rapid Progress in Knowledge, as having no headstrong Appetites to mislead it, nor carnal Passions to damp its Affection.

From henceforth, the only Danger is from the Quarter opposite, namely, lest the Mind's ardent Love of Truth should engage it in Abstractions, and carry it beyond the Limits of those Truths, which are *here* given us to contemplate.

In order to apprehend this Danger, we are to take notice, that, of the immense intellectual System, an extremely small Portion lyes really within our Reach; the infinitely larger Part residing near the Throne of its Almighty Author, wrapp'd up in solemn and tremendous Darkness.

The Reason why so much is kept out of Sight, or set above the Mind's Comprehension, which by the unwearied Vigour of its Operations seems naturally capable of a much wider Grasp, appears to be, lest in this earthly Condition the Mind's Intention should become distracted by too great Variety of Ideas, or that it should make a wrong Choice, and pursue Truths of less present Importance too far, to the Neglect of those more necessary for its Improvement in this transitory Station.

This Reason is much supported by observing, that in the enlightened Part of the intellectual World, nay even in those clearest and brightest Portions of it, where full Science is to be had, Speculations, pushed beyond a certain Point, that Point where Use is reasonably supposed to end, and mere Curiosity to begin, conclude in Darkness, Extravagance, and Contradiction.

The not attending to this Reason seems to have
been

been the very thing, which has given Birth, and so long Continuance, to *Scepticism*. For Men seeing this to be the Issue of the clearest Principles, when pursued to an intemperate Length, concluded, against their Senses, that the Fountain was no purer than the remotest Streams. When both Reason and Experience might have taught them, that the Progress from Light to Darkness was not the *natural Condition* of Things, but the *arbitrary Decree* of infinite Wisdom and Mercy, which imposed this Barrier to the Extravagances of its giddy, lawless Creature.

But however this be, certain it is, that Men, raised and heated in the zealous Pursuit of Knowledge, have been always apt to run into the boundless Regions of Chimeras. Where, tho' lost and bewilder'd in visionary Ideas, yet, if of warm Imaginations, they have taken more Delight in those obscure and shadowy Paths, than any sober Follower of Truth, within the Limits of open Day, and Nature.

Now these Extravagancies, so taking in themselves, and so mischievous in their Consequences, proceeding from a Want of Modesty, and due Consciousness of the narrow Limits of the human Understanding, St. *Peter*, in his next Precept, with exquisite Skill, restrains. *Add*, says he,

to Knowledge, TEMPERANCE;

that is, *Sobriety, Moderation, Continence*, in the Pursuit of Truth. For as *Virtue*, without *Knowledge*, falls into all kind of *Fanaticism* in Practice; so *Knowledge*, without *Temperance*, leads to all kind of *Heresy* in Opinion. St. *Paul* observed, even in his Time, the Seeds of intemperate Knowledge begin to spring up and spread amongst his Converts, and therefore cautions them against *vain Philosophy* and a *Knowledge that puffeth up*. But this so de-

formed and laid waste the Christian Church in After-times, that the *new Earth* seem'd, for many Ages, to be under a second *Curse* of *bringing forth nothing but Thorns and Thistles*, so much more severe than the *first*, that these Delicacies were not to be produced without much Labour, and *Sweat of the Brow*.

Here again the *Roman Church* affords us a sad Example of the Mischiefs of *intemperate Knowledge*: For tho', as we observed before, there was great Scarcity of *true Knowledge* to direct their *Virtue*, they abounded in *false Knowledge* to corrupt their *Faith*: Tho' they refused to make the Religion of Nature the Interpreter of *Gospel-righteousness*, they sanctified the VAIN PHILOSOPHY OF THE GREEKS to explain *justifying Faith*.

We have seen what sort of *Saints* the Church of *Rome* adores: Let us now see what kind of *Doctors* she pins her Faith upon. As their *Devout* retired to their Cloisters to deform Virtue, so their *Learned* assembled in their Schools to corrupt Faith. Where mistaking Theology, which is a Science of Practice, for a Science of Speculation, *Knowledge*, which is ~~the~~ only *Means*, they took to be the *End* of Religion; and as that, which is the *End* of any thing, cannot be too much cultivated, they pursued *Knowledge* with such *intemperate* Rage, that, as if Religion was only a Trial of Skill, and the Rewards of it to be adjudged to the best Disputant, they spent their whole Lives in agitating and subtilizing *Questions of Faith*: Abundantly happy if, with all their Toil, they could at length obtain the never-fading Titles of *Doctors profound, irrefragable, subtil, and seraphic*. These, under the reverend Name of *School-men*, long monopolised the Manufactory of Faith; and wove their Cobwebs, thin and dark, for the Hangings of the Sanctuary.

To such then, you will easily believe, the *Apostle's*

stle's Creed soon became too clear and simple. They wanted one that would afford eternal Matter for Dispute and Wrangle. So, from the Article of *Mary the Virgin*, they invented one of *Mary the Goddess*: From the Article of *Christ once offered on the Cross for our Redemption*, they spun out a *daily Sacrifice*; and the portentous Idea of a *Transubstantiation*: From *his Descent into Hell* they deduced the Fable of *Purgatory*: From *Belief in the Holy Catholic Church*, the blasphemous Tenet of the *Pope's Infallibility*: From the *Communion of Saints*, the idolatrous *Worship of dead Men*: And from the *Forgiveness of Sins*, the gainful Trade of *auricular Confession, and human Absolution*.

But none of these strange Doctrines being to be found in *Scripture*, they were forced to call in the Aid of *Tradition* to strengthen the feeble Arguments of School-subtilties. And Tradition drawing at its Heels a thousand other beggarly Errors, which were now all to be supported and maintained; this gave Life to an After-birth of Heresies, and fresh Employment for the Foster-fathers of the *Schools*. So that at length the true Foundation, the simple Faith in *Jesus the Messiah* was lost and forgotten, and lay, for many Ages, buried under two deformed Heaps of Rubbish, SCHOOL-DIVINITY and TRADITION; over each of which, like the *Ædiles in ancient ROME*, a venerable Magistrate presided, *That called the Master of the Sums, and This of the Sentences*.

At last, in God's good Time, this Precept of *adding Temperance to Knowledge* began to operate on honest Minds; and the Truth, which flamed out from the well-regulated Labours of such, soon burnt up and consumed this precious Superstructure of *Wood, Hay and Stubble*. When the true Faith, like *tried Silver*, appeared again in its native Purity and Candour. In this Condition we received
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it from our Fathers. Which sacred Deposite let us religiously preserve, and with the same pious Care transmit to our Posterity: Having always in mind that *we are built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, (not the Masters of the Summs and Sentences, or their Successors) Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone.*

The avoiding those Evils then is the Advantage that *Knowledge* receives from *Temperance*. A reciprocal Advantage *Temperance* receives from *Knowledge*: For *Temperance* being nothing but Abstinence from all visionary Pursuits, and all rash Judgment, out of a Sense and Conviction of the Weakness of human Understanding, was it not founded upon *Knowledge*, it would be in Danger of degenerating into a slothful Scepticism, a total Uncertainty of *all things*, from a superficial Examination of the *most obvious*; a fatal Aptitude in concluding that Truth was not to be found at all, from being too soon weary of the Search. A Condition which, we experience, has befallen, and must, unavoidably, befall those, whose *Temperance* is not founded on *Knowledge*. But being thus secured, *Temperance* preserves a vigorous, as well as sober Course: For the regular Restraint, that it imposes on the Mind, hinders not the Mind from the most active Exercise of its Faculties, but only confines it to the Objects adequate to its Contemplation.

We have observed, that the Fitness of the Practice of *Temperance* arises from our Sense of the Weakness of human Understanding. But *this Sense* should not only, in Reason, dispose us to be *moderate* in our own Opinions, but to be candid and charitable with regard to *those of others*: And till *Temperance* have this Efficacy, it is incompleat and partial.

To render it therefore uniform and perfect, St. Peter, in his next Precept, enjoins us to *add*

to Temperance, PATIENCE ;

that is, *Long-suffering*, and bearing with the Contradiction of others *. This is indeed the natural Consequence of a perfect *Temperance*. For having experienced, in our own Case, how insensibly Errors insinuate themselves into the Mind ; how plausibly they assume the Air of Truth, when called to account ; how obstinately they maintain their Ground, when now become suspected ; and what Labour is required to dispossess them, even after they are laid open and exposed ;—having experienced, I say, all this, we shall be well inclined to bear with *Patience* the Contradiction of our erring Brother. We shall then preserve for him the same fraternal Kindness, we had before he went astray ; and shall not suffer his being of another Church, or Sect, or Party, or any thing but an *unchristian Life*, to lessen that Affection : (so far shall we be from endeavouring, on account of any Heresies in Opinion, to injure him in his Reputation, Goods, or Person :) But with *Temperance* and *Patience* wait the second Coming of the Messiah to *separate the Tares from the Wheat*.

The Want of which *Virtues*, amongst those, who yet dare to call themselves *the Followers of the Lamb*, hath brought more Desolation on the Christian Church, than all the Persecutions of Pagan Emperors, or the Eruptions of Northern Barbari-

* The Original is *ὑπομονή*. The Reason why the Apostle used this Word rather than *μακροθυμία*, which may seem to be the more proper Word for the Sense I give to *Patience*, appears to me to be this—The Church, at the Time of writing this Epistle, was in a subject and distressed Condition, not in a flourishing and governing one. And *ὑπομονή* is the *Patience* of those in Subjection, as *μακροθυμία* is the *Patience* of those in Authority. Besides, *ὑπομονή* in the *New Testament* generally signifies a *Patience* attended with Hope and Expectation of better. And that Sense I make to be required here.

ans: Less Pagan, and less Barbarian, than the Author of the Principle of Intolerance, who pretending to sit in the Chair of him, who here enjoins us to *add Patience to Temperance*, and calling himself the *Vicar of Christ*, hath not been ashamed to make *him* the Pattern of his Conduct, who was an *Accuser of his Brethren*, and a *Murderer from the Beginning*.

The Christian Church, in its Infancy, breathed nothing but Concord, Love, and Charity. It had *then* a Spirit as pure, and innocent, as the State of Childhood itself. The holy Brethren were, in *Malice*, *Children*; howbeit, in *Understanding*, that is in rational Faith, in vigorous Virtue, and in sober Knowledge, they were *Men*. And thus was the *new Jerusalem built like a City, that is in Unity with itself*. No Disputes, no Strife, no Emulation, but who should most excel in Works of Charity and Piety.

But, alas! this glorious rising of the Gospel, which came with *Healing in its Wings*, and promised the Arrival of that long-wished-for Day of *everlasting Peace*, was of a sudden overcast, and nothing but Tempests and Storms succeeded. For our evil Genius, the *Prince of the Air*, was early at work to obscure and deface the promised Triumphs of the *Sun of Righteousness*. Nor was the Engine he employed to defeat Man's *Restoration*, different from that, with which he procured his *Fall*: It was, still, *Knowledge without its Regulator, Temperance*.

For when now the *Schools*, by obtruding on the World a System of Absurdities under the Name of Christianity, had produced Schisms and Dissentions; and the *Cloisters*, by perfecting their Saints in a *four Inhumanity* and holy Pride, had raised a Spirit impatient of Contradiction (and the Papal History informs us that their *learnedest Doctors* were the most unintelligible, and their *holiest Saints* the

east

least forbearing :) then it was that their *Church*, impregnated with these Mischiefs, brought forth the Fury, *Persecution*.

Of all the *Mysteries of Iniquity* the Science of Persecution is the soonest learnt and easiest reduced into a Compendium. On which Account it has had its Proficients, that were fit for nothing else, in every Sect and Party. But this *short and direct Course* is no where better marked out than in the *Roman Breviary*. Where it is reduced to these three clear and simple Principles to *blacken, starve and burn*. And as soon as that Church had got a proper Subject, whereon to put them in Practice, we see how soon it brought this Science to Perfection. The *Albigenses* and *Valdenses*, a stubborn People, who refused to receive the Mark of the Beast, were the first that underwent this Discipline in Form. There was no imaginary Crime or Impiety, that could tend to make them odious to good Men, but what their Enemies accused them of. By this means they easily persuaded the Civil Magistrate to withdraw his Protection; the Consequence of which was their undergoing all the Miseries that proceed from the Rage of an incensed Sovereign. But it was not enough for this Church that she was *Accuser*, she would be *Judge* and *Executioner* likewise: And for this End erected an *INQUISITION*, that Masterpiece of her Ecclesiastical Policy, that infallible *Catholicon* against Heretical Pravity. A Court of Judicature, or rather an infernal Butchery, where the Process is as directly opposite to the Law of Nations, as the horrid Sentence that follows, is to all the Precepts of the Gospel.

But, (Holy *Jesus*!) should I relate the Tricks, the Treacheries, the Frauds, the Rapines, the Delays, the Horrors of Imprisonment, the Tortures of the Rack, the Bloodshed, the Murders practised there, Murders committed with so exquisite a Malice,

lice, that the *Body, Soul, and Reputation* are intended to fall a Sacrifice at once,—should I, I say, but represent these Things to you in their native Colours, I am afraid, that by raising your Indignation, I should endanger that Heaven-born Charity, which it is my Aim to recommend to you even here, and here chiefly, where I am pointing out the enormous Evils that are occasioned by the Exclusion of her benign Influence.

I shall therefore draw a Veil over this unhappy Scene, that gives so fatal a Wound to the Integrity of the Christian Name, and infixes so lasting a Disgrace even on our common Nature. Content to have given you one general View of the *Papal Religion*; which, under the Name of a *Religion*, is indeed no other than an impious *Farce*. I have shewn you, in their Order, the *three Acts* of which it consists: The first *played* by their *Saints*, and their Subject, *Fanatic Virtue*: The second by their *Doctors*, and their *unintelligible Faith*: The third by their *Priests*, and their antichristian *Discipline of Racks and Gibbets*. I have shewn you likewise the Connexion these three Parts have on one another, and the natural Tendency of the two first to produce the dreadful *Catastrophe* of the third. Where Virtue stript of Humanity, and Faith forsook of Reason, turn Charity into bitter Zeal, and Piety into Persecution.

Such a View should teach us to set a just Value on our own happy Constitution, where *Gospel-light* and *Civil Liberty* go Hand in Hand. And be you well assured that these two Blessings must stand or fall together: That Civil Slavery will make room for Popish Cruelty; and that Popish Superstition will support a Tyrant in trampling on our Laws. For the Politician knows that the surest Way of fixing Slavery is to tye it on the Consciences of Men: And the Priest has experienced, that the

Mind

Mind is never so tame and servile, so submissive in swallowing Contradictions, as when the Body is already broke and humbled by the Stroke of Tyranny.

Thus hath the Apostle shewn us that the Security against the Evils of Dissension and Intolerance are *Temperance* and *Patience*; which teach us to *feel* our own Weakness, and to *bear* with that of others. But here again the Infirmary of our common Nature betrays itself, and *Temperance* and *Patience*, excellent and divine as they are, become subject to the general Fate of human Virtues; grow degenerate and depraved. Thus, too oft, Moderation and Toleration sink into Carelessness and Indifference, a fatal Indifference for all *Truth* and all *Religion*. That Men, and even Churches are but too apt to fall into that remiss and *lukewarm* State, for which, the Holy Spirit denounced so severe a Judgment on the *Laodiceans*, we have melancholy Proof. Nor is such a Degeneracy hard to be conceived. For when the corrosive Ferment of bitter Zeal, which desolates Mankind under a pretended Concern for the Glory of God, has, by the Infusion of the cool and heavenly Dew of Moderation and Tolerance, been brought to a gentle Temperature; the Mind, become tired and ashamed of its late tumultuous Disorders, is apt to sink into the other Extream, and grow languid and unactive. To provide therefore against this Defect is the Design of our Apostle's next Precept, which bids us *add*

to Patience, GODLINESS.

And then, at the same time that we preserve the greatest Moderation towards others, we shall keep alive the holy Fire of *spotless* Zeal in ourselves. For by *Godliness* is meant the warm affectionate

Discharge of all the Duties of Divine Adoration, whether in public Offices, or private Meditation.

With exquisite Skill likewise hath our Apostle raised this second Order of Christian Architecture, *Godliness*, or the *divine Virtue*, on the former, namely, the *human*. For, by this Means, *Godliness* cannot degenerate, as it did in the Church of *Rome*, from not observing this Direction, either into Fancism, Superstition or Bigotry ; but will remain sober, rational and truly sublime.

And yet hath it another Danger under which it sometimes falls. For by long and intense Exercise in Holy Offices, and Intercourse with Heaven, the Joy and Transport that elate the Mind, thus filled with its true and proper Object, God, naturally disposeth it to contemn all inferior Things ; and from despising the Things, but too often, to despise the Persons who delight in them : And by making odious Comparisons, like the *Pharisee in regarding the Publican*, to forget its Relation, its near Relation, both by *Nature and Grace*, to the meanest of its Species. Hence ariseth *spiritual Pride*, the last and most fatal Enemy to true *Godliness*. Now for this too the Apostle in his next Precept provides a Remedy. *Add*, says he,

to Godliness, BROTHERLY-KINDNESS.

Thus begins the third, and last Order of this Christian Building. And, from this Time, *Godliness*, placed between, and supported on each Hand by, the *human* and *social*. Virtues, becomes stable and perfect. And while it receives this united Aid from both, returns it back to both.

We have shewn the Benefits *Temperance and Patience* receive from *Godliness* : We are now to speak of that which *Brotherly-kindness* receives from it.

The most beauteous, and elevated Branch of
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Brotherly-kindness is *Friendship*, whose natural Root and Origin is Similitude of Manners. But *these* being as often bad as good, *Friendship* becomes as frequently a Confederacy in Vice, as a Community of Virtue. So that this adorable Virtue, the Cordial of private Life, and largest Source of public Good, by being built on the false Foundation of *Ungodliness*, hath often produced all that Mischief to Society it was designed by Nature to prevent. But when, as here, 'tis rightly placed on *Godliness*, it stands secure from Abuse, and enabled to bring forth its genuine Fruits of public Beneficence.

Brotherly-kindness is now only liable to one Disorder, (for human Depravity will shew itself to the very last,) which is this, that *Brotherly-kindness* being enjoined to be built on *Godliness* or Religion, Men are yet too apt, like the *Pharisees* of old, to confine their *Brotherly-kindness* within their own *Sett* or *Pale*: While all *without* are treated by them as the wounded Traveller by the Priest and Levite.

But this narrow and partial Benevolence the Apostle has effectually removed in the concluding Precept of my Text. *Add*, says he, in the last Place,

to Brotherly-kindness, CHARITY;

that is, universal Love of all Mankind. This regulates and perfects all the *other Virtues*; and is, itself, in no want of a Reformer. All the *other Virtues*, as we have observed, degenerate both by Defect and Excess: *This* is incapable of either. Its Nature and Essence secure it from Defect; and its Fruits and Products from Excess.

This then is the *Crown*, the *Key-stone* of this heavenly *Edifice*, this *triumphant Arch* of Immortality, or, as the Holy Apostle most emphatically calls it, *the Bond of Perfection*. *This*, with respect to the foregoing *Virtues*, is like the gilt Dome, or Covering

ing of the Imperial Palace. Without which, the strongest Foundations, the richest ornamented Walls, the best-disposed Apartments, become, in a little time, but naked and deformed Ruins; open to every Storm, and exposed to all the Desolation of wasting Elements.

Without this, if we may believe his Fellow-Labourer St. Paul, the rest of the Christian Building hath neither Ornament nor Use; for without it, the very Foundation is precarious and unstable: *Tho' I have all FAITH*, says he, *so that I could remove Mountains, and have no CHARITY, I am nothing.* VIRTUE, likewise, without it, is equally unprofitable: *Tho' I give my Body to be burnt, and have no CHARITY, it profiteth me nothing.* KNOWLEDGE likewise without it is vain and brutal; *Tho' I speak with the Tongues of Men and of Angels, and have all KNOWLEDGE, and have not CHARITY, I am become as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal.* Even GODLINESS is unacceptable without it: *Tho' I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and have no CHARITY, I am nothing.* Lastly, BROTHERLY-KINDNESS will, without it, go unrewarded: *Tho' I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and have not CHARITY, it profiteth me nothing.*

But, *in this*, as the same Apostle tells us, are comprized all the Efficacies of the foregoing Graces: For, like FAITH, he tells us, it *believeth all things*, it *hopeth all things*; like VIRTUE, it *thinketh no Evil*, it *doth not behave itself unseemly*; like true KNOWLEDGE, it *vaunteth not itself*, it *is not puffed up*; like TEMPERANCE and PATIENCE, it *suffereth long*, and *is kind*, it *is not easily provoked*, it *beareth all things*, it *endureth all things*; like GODLINESS, it *rejoiceth not in Iniquity*, but *rejoiceth in the Truth*; and like BROTHERLY-KINDNESS, it *envieth not*, it *seeketh not its own*.

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In a Word, beginning then with *Faith*, and finishing with *Charity*, or, as the same Apostle much better expresseth it, FAITH WORKING BY CHARITY, we come to erect, after the divine Model here given us, that heavenly Edifice of *Christian Perfection*, *Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone, in whom all the Building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an Holy Temple in the Lord.*

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Page 12, Line 24. for the only *Means*, read, only the *Means*.
 P. 16. l. 16. for. *in Unity with itself*, read *at Unity in itself*.

P O S T S C R I P T.

AS the Publication of this Sermon is the only Return I shall make to all the enormous Heap of Calumny and Nonsense, written against me in the *Weekly Miscellany*, in order to give the Authors of it some Idea of the true Spirit of Christianity, which they seem very much to want, I think it proper to take notice, in this Place, of two things, and (as far as I can learn) the *only* two things, that some People pretend to be serious upon: The one relating to what I say of the *Defenders of Christianity*, and the other, of the *Character of Cicero*.

But, in this, my Design is not barely to vindicate *my Meaning*, but to insist upon the *Clearness of it*, in order to shew that the Inventors and Propagators of these Calumnies are without Excuse.

I say in *Page 2.* of my Book—*Who in this long Controversy between us and the Deists hath not applied, to certain late Advocates of Revelation, what was formerly said of Arnobius and Lactantius, that they undertook the Defence of Christianity before they understood it: A Misfortune which the more careful Study of the internal Evidence would probably have prevented.* From these Words, the Authors of the *Weekly Miscellany* of Febr. 24. thought fit to charge me with saying, that *they* [the English Clergy] *had undertaken to prove Christianity without understanding it.* On which, in my Vindication, I accused them of Calumny. And to cut the Matter short, I affirmed that in the Passage above, *p. 2.* of my Book, *I meant no English Clergyman whatsoever*, understanding the Words *English Clergyman* in the Sense they used them, *Clergymen of the Church of England.* In answer to this, these Writers, in the *Weekly*

Weekly Miscellany of May 5. have the surprizing Assurance to tell the Public, that IN THE VERY PASSAGE IT SELF, WHERE I MAKE THE OBSERVATION, [namely the Passage quoted above from p. 2.] I REFER BY NAME TO AN ENGLISH CLERGYMAN. Let the Reader now take the Book, turn to p. 2. and, with his own Eyes, convict them of the most impudent of all Falshoods. Where he will see, that *in the very Passage itself, where I make the Observation, I refer not by Name, or otherwise, to any Man whatsoever.*—Where he will see, that the Clergyman, referred to by Name, is mentioned on a quite different Account, and in the next Page, and in a new Paragraph, beginning at these Words, *But, from the State in which, &c.* But this wicked Calumny was for the sake of introducing another, namely, that I put Dr. C. amongst the bad Defenders of Christianity. A Writer, whom, tho' I differ from him about the Value of the *internal Evidence*, I do my self, not him, the Credit of esteeming, as all the World does, in the first Rank of the ablest Defenders of Christianity.

The Reader now sees with what Justice I have been used. Here is a Passage, that, *alone*, may either include, or may not, an *English Clergyman*. I have explained my Meaning, and declared I meant *no English Clergyman*. Ought not this in Justice to have satisfied every candid Reader? No. I then go on, and say, it is highly improbable I should mean an *English Clergyman*, because in my *Dedication*, p. 19. I say *the Clergy of the Established Church are the Men who, amongst us, have been principally watchful in the common Cause of Christianity, and most SUCCESSFUL in repelling the Insults of its Enemies.* Will this satisfy? As little. Why? Hear my *Christian Adversaries*, *Weekly Miscellany, May 5,* MOST SUCCESSFUL, *I perceive, is put in large Letters, but they prove but little. Much less can they disprove the Reality of a PLAIN FACT.* But as to the general

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Character

Character of the established Clergy's Writings in this Controversy, Mr. W. may think that they have wrote the most and the best in the Controversy, and with the most Success, or Effect, and yet be of Opinion, that they have been mistaken as to the right Management of the Cause, and have not clearly proved the Truth of Christianity. Wonderful Goodness of Interpretation! Well might the Writer say, I hope I shall always be particularly candid and charitable in my Thoughts of my Brethren.

I go on then, as this will not do, and shew further, that it was not only *highly probable* I did not, in the Place objected to, mean any *English Clergyman*, but that it is *evident*, on all the common established Principles of Interpretation, I, *in fact*, did not mean them, but a very different sort of People. I have lamented, as well in other Places of my Book, as in this second *Page*, that several Professors of Christianity appear to be ignorant of its very Essence. I have explained this Ignorance to consist in the prevailing Opinion of Christianity's being only a Republication of the Religion of Nature; and that *Jesus's* Redemption of Mankind, and his Satisfaction, are only figurative Expressions. This I hold to be an Ignorance that affects the very Essence of Christianity; and the only one, I know of, that does so. In the very Passage, *p. 2.* I speak of *such* an Ignorance, and no other. For I speak of *Defenders who do not understand Christianity.* Whether I had Reason, let those judge, who remember the several Answers to the *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*, and to *Christianity as old as the Creation*, which went altogether upon the worst Socinianism; representing *Jesus* as only a Divine Preacher of moral Righteousness. Some of these were *with Names*, some *without*. Those with Names were not Clergymen of the Church of *England*: Those without, I presume, were as little so. One of these latter I remember bore a Title

to this Purpose, if not in these very Words, *Christianity not dependent on Judaism*. These, and only these, were the Writers I had in View, where I say *certain late Advocates undertook the Defence of Christianity before they understood it*. Why I said this Ignorance was a *Misfortune which the more careful Study of the internal Evidence would probably have prevented*, was, because that Study (from whence arises to View such a Number of surprizing Coincidencies and Dependences, as, *internally*, prove, that two Religions, delivered at such distant Periods, could not be of human Invention) that Study, I say, consists in setting together and comparing the two Revelations, by *Moses* and *Jesus*; from whence may be demonstratively shewn that the *Redemption of Mankind* is a real Thing, not a figurative Expression. And now I appeal to the learned Reader to determine whether I had Reason to speak as I did. But my *more learned* Adversaries will have it, that I must needs mean those who defended Religion by *external Evidence*; that is, that those who *so* defended it did *not understand it*. But have I said one Word against *external Evidence*, unless the saying it is not capable of *strict Demonstration*, be speaking against it? Have I not said, *p. 3. That Men have proved our Religion actually divine thereby?* But is it likely that Men who understand it not, should be so successful in proving its Divinity? What have I done then to raise these Mens Clamours about the *external Evidence*? Why, convinced as I was, that the *external Evidence* had been enforced all manner of Ways, in the fullest and clearest Manner, to the establishing the Truth of our Religion, I ventured to exhort Men to the better Cultivation of the *internal Evidence*, a Province as yet almost unoccupied, and from whence the noblest Fruits, in Support of Divine Revelation, I am persuaded, may be produced. But does

the Cultivation of *this* clash with the Cultivation of the *external Evidence*, or draw us, in these Mens Bear-garden Language, from *our old Posture of Defence*. So far from that, that these two Methods mutually assist and support each other; and make the *Rock* of Christianity perfectly impregnable.

The striking then into a new Road, and shewing our Materials of Defence to be inexhaustible, is surely doing solid Honour to the Christian Name. *Error* must rely, as we see, in Fact, *modern Free-thinking* does, on the Strength of half a dozen plausible Sophisms. And the Business of our Adversaries, as I said elsewhere, is but to cook them up in different Disguises, just as the Palate of the Times, or the phantastic Appetite of their Followers give them Opportunity or Invitation. But *Truth*, which is eternal, and whose Relations are infinite, affords unexhausted Matter of Defence. The *Views* in which she may be placed are numberless, and sober Contemplation flashes Conviction on every *View*. And now, that wonderful Observation of my Adversaries may be seen in its full Force and Vigour, *April 28*. HIS DEMONSTRATION, IF HE COULD MAKE ONE OF IT, COULD NEVER MAKE US AMENDS FOR CHANGING OUR POSTURE OF DEFENCE, AND DESERTING OUR STRONG-HOLDS.

I come now to the second Point, my Reflections on *Tully's* Character in p. 363. I shall beg Leave to transcribe the whole Passage, and vindicate it from the blackest of Calumnies.—*But the principal Difficulty* [in coming to *Tully's* real Sentiments] *arises from the several various Characters he* [*Tully*] *sustained in Life, and in his Writings, that habituated him to feign and dissemble his Opinions: in which, THO' HE ACTED NEITHER A WEAK NOR UNFAIR PART, yet, certainly, a very impenetrable one, with regard to his own Opinions. He may be considered under the*
Character

Character of an ORATOR, a STATESMAN and a PHILOSOPHER, ALL EQUALLY PERSONATED, and no one more the real Man than the other, but taken up, and laid down for the Occasion.

This is the dreadful Passage which my good Christian Adversaries represent as a *direct and formal Defence of Lying.*

I say then, that *Tully* in thus feigning and dissembling his own Opinions acted neither a weak nor unfair Part. What Part is it I must mean? I have not left it to the Reader to conjecture. I have confined him to my Meaning. I have expressly told him, a *personated Part of Orator, Statesman, and Philosopher.*

Let us see then whether I can be justified in saying, the Part was neither weak nor unfair.

1. AS A STATESMAN, he discharged the Office of a real Patriot, and Defender of his Country, at that time, torn in pieces by the Dissensions between Senate and People. But was this done by speaking his real Sentiments to both? Both were very faulty; and, as faulty Folks generally are, too angry to hear Reason. I have given an Instance in the Case of the *Catiline Conspiracy*: where, to the Senate, he represents the Treason as the most deep laid and dangerous; to the People, just the contrary. Was this wisely conducted? The Issue declared it. He saved the Republic. With regard then to his *personated Character of Statesman*, I said, and still say, that he acted no WEAK PART.

2. Come we now to his PHILOSOPHIC Character. I had observed, p. 362. that his End and Design in writing his philosophic Works, was, not to deliver his own Opinion, on any Point, but to explain, to his Countrymen, in the most intelligible Manner, whatsoever the Greeks had taught, on every Article, whether of speculative or practical Knowledge. It was for this Reason that he said to those, who were for knowing his own Opinions, *Qui autem requirunt, quid, quaque*

quaque de re, ipsi sentiamus, curiosius id faciunt quam necesse est. In pursuance of his Design, he brings in *Stoics, Epicureans, Platonists, Academics*, and who not, upon the Stage, in order to instruct the *Romans* in *their* several various Opinions, and in *their* several Ways of Reasoning. Sometimes he himself acts the Person of the *Academic*; sometimes, others. But whether it be himself or others, it is the *Academic*, not *Tully*, who delivers his Opinion. Now when *Tully* has told us all this, when he has expressly said, that the End of his *philosophic Writings* was not to deliver his own Opinion, but the several Opinions of the *Greek Sects*, when he has blamed those Men, as too curious or impertinent, who sought after his own Opinions in these Writings; was not all *fair*? Was it not allowable in *personating* others to *feign* and *dissemble*? Are not the Writings themselves *Dramatical*? And is not this a Licence always indulged in a Fiction or Drama? What should hinder me then from saying, what I now say again, that, with regard to his Conduct in his *philosophic Character*, he *acted* no UNFAIR PART?

3. We now come to his *personated Character* of ORATOR. In *this* he was an *Advocate* for his Client, or, to speak more properly, *personated* him. Here then, without Question, he was to *feign* and *dissemble* his own Opinions, and to deliver those of his Client. And, tho' some *Casuists* have held it unlawful for an Advocate to defend what he thinks an ill Cause, yet I apprehend it to be the natural Right of every Member of Society, whether *accusing*, or *accused*, to speak freely and fully for himself: And if, either by a *legal* or *natural* Incapacity, this cannot be done in Person, that the State provide, or allow, that it may be done by Proxy. I apprehend all States have done this; and that every *Advocate* is such a Proxy. I suppose then the World will

not

not blame me when I persist to say, that *Tully*, *feigning and dissembling* his own Opinions under this Character, acted NEITHER A WEAK NOR UNFAIR PART.

There now only remains *Tully's own* and *real* Character to be spoken to. But do I say he *feigned and dissembled* in *this*? So far from it, that I expressly, and in so many Words, confine his *feigning* to those *three personated* Characters. And had I not done *this*, the very Tenour of my Dissertation would have *so* confined it. For I there shew how easy it is, when you take *Tully* in his *real Character*, to find out his *real Sentiments*. All the Embarras was occasioned by not *rightly* distinguishing between the *personated* and *real* Character: And the End of my Discourse was to establish that Distinction.

But now had I been so foolish, or rather so mad, as to vindicate the Innocence of Lying; and, to that end, have apologized for *Tully's* supposed Violation of Truth, under his real Character, as the Fact must have come entirely under a *moral* View, I had known as little of *English* as of *Virtue*, to talk of *Tully's* acting no *weak Part*, an Expression that relates only to his *Understanding*; or no *unfair Part*, an Expression that relates to his *Breeding*, to a Point of Civility in not imposing on good Company, rather than to his Morals. Allow me but the Sense, or Expression, of a Plow-man, and I must then have said, *neither a wicked nor an unfaithful Part*, Falshood being indeed a Crime both against God and our Neighbour.

But unhappily for me, I have had Readers who could not see this Difference; and yet would set up for Critics: And so, for want of distinct Ideas between *weak and unfair*, and *wicked and unfaithful*, have run into the Error of this Accusation. I will, in mere Charity, suppose this to be the Case, be-
cause

cause every one sees that no Man, with such distinct Ideas, could have thus accused me, in the Integrity of his Heart; even tho' I had not, as it is very certain I have, made it impossible, on other Accounts, for any honest Man to mistake my Meaning, when he had carefully considered the whole Dissertation.

But now, what must a serious Man think, when he sees my Accuser, generally supposed to be a *Professor of Divinity*, in his last Letter exult over me on these *two Heads* as a Person who had forfeited all good Faith? But what will be his Astonishment when he recollects, that this very Accuser is himself a CALUMNIATOR CONVICT: One who hath been publickly charged with Falshood for saying that *the Author of the Divine Legation of Moses, &c. is very severe upon ALL Clergymen who take the Liberty of censuring the Conduct of ANY OF THEIR BRETHREN*; and yet hath neither had the *Courage* to deny the Charge, nor the *Grace* to give Glory to God, by an ingenuous Confession of his Crime?

In Conclusion, if any candid Man of Reputation and Character apprehends any thing to be amiss in my Book, and will publish his Objections, in the Love of *Truth*, and Spirit of *Charity*; and set his Name to his Writings, as I have done to mine, he shall not wait long for an Answer; either acknowledging my Mistakes, or, as I see just Cause, standing on my Vindication, with all the Respect and Acknowledgment of a Man obliged to his best Friend. But as to those nameless Libellers, I must beg to be excused, how desirous soever they appear, in their last Letter, of an Answer from me.

F I N I S.

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